

Christianity and Crisis

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion

VOL. XII, No. 18

OCTOBER 27, 1952

\$2.00 per year; 10 cents per copy

When the Foundations Are Destroyed . . .

ONE of the reasons why we are learning much from the Christians of Europe today is that the faith of many of them has been tested by fire—and not in a conventional sense, but in the sense of a destroying conflagration that has both left their cities in rubble and devoured the pillars and structures of the spiritual and cultural life of society. In the spiritual waste created by Nazism and Communism as well as by a Philistine secularism, in the rain of explosive and incendiary bombs, the concentration camps, the uprooting of populations, the scorched earth that followed the armies, and the chaotic aftermath of war, the Christian has been confronted with the question: "When the foundations are destroyed, what shall the righteous do?"

It is good for the Christian in our more protected situation to face similar eventualities as he must if he dwells upon the possibilities of atomic war. Is our grasp of the Christian faith of such a kind as to meet such tests?

In a sermon at Princeton in connection with the Centennial of Wordsworth's death, Dean Sperry of Harvard noted a remarkable passage in *The Prelude*:

A thought is with me sometimes, and I say—
Should the whole frame of earth by inward throes
Be wrenched, or fire come down from far to
scorch

Her pleasant habitations, and dry up
Old Ocean, in his bed left singed and bare,
Yet would the living Presence still subsist
Victorious, and composure would ensue,
And kindlings like the morning—presage sure
Of day returning and of life revived.

We are prone today to question the optimism of the Romantics. Wordsworth, however, went deeper than all the others and we should recognize an analogy at least in his confidence to that of the evangelical be-

liever. As Dean Sperry rightly says, "This faith was not an inference from immediate facts; it was a confidence grounded in the poet's mature convictions as to the witness of nature to the character of God." This faith, moreover, was tested by events and circumstances of his time that offer a parallel to those of today.

Today, taught by our fellow Christians in Europe and Korea, the church can point more clearly to that rock of confidence which no doubt lay as an implicit basis behind the faith of Wordsworth. And if—to use terms which we have used elsewhere—such unimaginable disasters come as atomic war, continent-wide ravages of plague and famine, and the relapse of civilization into relative barbarism; if all that Europe and the West have built up through the centuries becomes liquidated save for surviving islands of continuity and seed-beds of a new cycle; if, as it were, a new ice cap settles over the hearths and habitations of science, learning, art and piety of the West if not throughout the world; if the libraries, museums, galleries, laboratories, shrines that represent or safeguard the spiritual treasures of millennia are calcined in dust and ashes; and if the survivors are too enfeebled or incompetent to cherish the chance survivals; if, we say, all this comes to pass, it will not be impossible for the Christian understanding of man and history to come to terms with it, guided above all by the experience of the prophets. There will still be the Remnant, and the acknowledgment, both baffling and reassuring, voiced by Lincoln: "The Almighty hath his own purposes."

Even if we do not know or understand these purposes we can trust them in our public as in our private catastrophes as those who have already died to the world: not as though the world had thereby become a matter of indifference to us, but in the sense that we are linked with him who both died and rose again, who both judges and redeems the world.

—A.N.W.

Prayer and Politics

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

WHY is it that our prayers and devotions, which we fondly believe to be the source of spiritual strength and humility for our people should, when they are transferred from the walls of our several houses of prayer to a big public gathering, be an offense alike to the devout and the scornful? In a memorable editorial this summer the *Christian Century* protested against the "exploitation" of religions by the political conventions. It spoke for many of us; but the word "exploitation" defines only a part but not the whole of the offense. Religion is exploited when it is used for ulterior purposes; there is a strong suspicion that it is so used at large political meetings. It is interesting that there would be a temptation to exploit it; for prayer is a discipline of humility and consecration which naturally creates the temptation to be used not for its original purpose but for pretending a humility and consecration which we do not have. One is reminded of Jesus' warning against praying in the market place "to be seen of men," and His admonition to pray in secret "that the Father who seeth you in secret will reward you openly." There is, incidentally, a strong inclination to use religious observances at conventions in order to seek the favor of the three denominational groups—Protestant, Jewish, and Catholic—who are invariably represented in the official prayers. Europeans find these religious observances at our political occasions quite as baffling as they find the political convention itself. Perhaps they illustrate an intimate and uncritical relationship between religion and public life in our nation which marks us at one and the same time as one of the most religious and the most secular of nations.

But the offense is given not only by conscious or unconscious "exploitation" of religion. It is also given by an accommodation of religion to the political purposes of the gathering. In detecting accommodation we make no criticism of the eminent clergymen who led the prayers at the conventions. Most of them did as well as any of the rest of us would do. Nevertheless the total effect of their labors was accommodation. The *Century* thought the prayers were "too long and too eloquent." The criticism is correct, but one must observe that they were only a little longer and a little more eloquent than the ordinary long prayer of our churches. (This may point to a distinctive Protestant failing, but it is worth observing that when Catholic priests or

prelates conduct prayers outside their church and free from their liturgical disciplines, their prayers sound more like a political harangue than the prayers of most Protestant ministers.) A prayer which is too long and too eloquent betrays that it is delivered for the ears of man and not God. Prayers must be eloquent only with the eloquence of brevity and chastity. Length and eloquence do not of themselves accommodate the prayer to ulterior purpose but they contribute to the effect. One remembers Jesus' warning against long prayers being coupled with His warning against prayers in public. In any event, how quickly the prayer loses its virtue in the new surrounding! Thus prayers of gratitude for God's blessings upon this nation easily turn into exercises in self-congratulation about the virtues of our national history. Prayers of contrition are easily bent to partisan purposes. Contrition for national corruption sounds like a political document in a Republican convention and repentance for national irresponsibility has the same effect in a Democratic convention.

We were most impressed by the quick degeneration of prayers of aspiration in which the ideal goals of the nation were held up as ends of consecration. How quickly these aspirations degenerate into sentimentality when the ideal goal is not held in proper balance with the forces of inertia and sin in life which prevent an easy realization of the goal. Some of these corruptions are not so much in the defects of the priest's prayer as in the pressures of the public gathering.

It would be defeatist to suggest that the way to keep religion pure is to preserve it from contact from these public occasions. Yet the public reaction to the prayers was a wholesome one. We know that public men who ostentatiously display their religious faith are treated with cynicism by the public, which expresses by its reaction its understanding of the fact that religion, which is usually a source of humility, may also be a "source of pride to those who are proud," and may on occasion be the instrument of insincerity, precisely because it is ideally a discipline of sincerity.

We religious people will have to accustom ourselves to the thought that religion may be a source of corruption as well as of wisdom and light; and that the corruption may come not from some flagrant dis-

tortion of malice, but from weakness in the heart of the devout. The same prayer which lifts the heart of men to God could also be used by the Pharisee to thank God that he was not as other men. And the same devotion which has a usual fruit of love "joy and peace" may also produce the fruits of fanaticism and cruelty. This is the fruit if men arise from their devotions with the conviction that their purposes are identical with the will of God.

The radical nature of human freedom makes it

inevitable that in the final encounter between man and God the proper response of contrite recognition of the vanity of human pretensions should become among some the final vehicle of pretension. That is why it is difficult to isolate the true church of genuine believers for any one who does not look into the heart. Only God can look into the heart. That is also why we are taught that "by their fruits ye shall know them." The contrasting fruits of humble and vain prayer are obvious to us all.

Report on Lund

DOUGLAS HORTON

THE Third Conference on Faith and Order is now a chapter in church history. There were 230 delegates present, with a number of consultants and other members *ex officio*, who brought the total to over 300. All of the greater communions of the world were represented.

The most notable absence was that of delegates from the Orthodox Church of Greece. In the words of one who knows the situation in ecclesiastical Athens, there was "a storm in the East"—a storm compounded of international political winds and of high local gusts swirling about the succession to the archiepiscopate. There seems to be no reason for believing that this tempest, which prevented the attendance of an important group, will be more than temporary.

The most notable presence was that of four officially appointed unofficial observers from the Roman Catholic Church. These were named by the Roman Catholic authorities in Sweden, by permission of Rome. So far as I know, this was the first time in history that any such arrangement has had the official sanction of the Church. The observers were welcomed most heartily to all the plenary and section meetings.

The German *Katholikentag*, a great mass-meeting of German Roman Catholics gathered to celebrate the 75th anniversary of their organization, sent greetings to the Conference at Lund. At these gracious acts historians must rub their eyes.

Present at the conference were healthy representations from countries on the far side of the iron curtain — Czechoslovakia, East-Zone Germans, Hungarians — though none from Russia itself. Dr. Hromadka of Prague, one of the few stated speakers at a plenary session, seemed very much as we had known him in America years ago, serious, eager, but relaxed, as among friends. The East-Zone Germans apparently look forward without misgiving to con-

tinued collaboration with the World Council. The Hungarian clergy had systematically studied the literature sent out in preparation for the conference and had sent to all delegates an able critique of it, pointing out that it leaned noticeably in the direction of (a) the type of Catholicism associated with episcopal succession and (b) the political thought of the West.

The fact that there were only three women present is of no particular significance, for the simple reason that the personnel of the conference was a cross section of the theological world. When more women devote themselves to theology there will be more of them present at future Lunds.

At the first business session of the conference Archbishop Brilioth, the primate of Sweden, was elected President of the Conference — and a most efficient presiding officer he proved to be. At his hand constantly was the Rev. Oliver S. Tomkins, who for several years has been the secretary of the Commission on Faith and Order (of the World Council of Churches) under whose auspices the conference was held. Mr. Tomkins presently becomes the Master of Lincoln College, Oxford, leaving his office with the Commission to the Rev. J. Robert Nelson of the U. S. A.

These and the other leaders kept the eyes of the delegates on the basic purpose of the conference. This was not, as some of the bewildered reporters for American periodicals seemed to think, to pull church union out of a hat, but to do the preparatory theological work of "clearing away misunderstandings, discussing obstacles to reunion, and issuing reports" to be submitted to the many denominations of the world for their consideration.

The Conferences on Faith and Order are the classroom of the Ecumenical Movement, each confessional group teaching every other about itself and all seeking the truth under which they may attain to full cooperation.

That movement is impressive in its total dimen-

Douglas Horton was vice president of the Lund Conference.

sions. During the last fifteen years interdenominational cooperation has sprung into being at points simply too numerous to be listed. The report of the Rt. Rev. Stephen Neill on unions more intimate than those of mere cooperation was handed to the delegates at Lund. It shows, since 1937,

- 13 organic unions achieved, of which
 - 7 are intra-confessional, and
 - 6 are trans-confessional;
- 1 full intercommunion achieved;
- 2 limited intercommunions achieved;
- 16 negotiations with a view to organic union still in progress, of which
 - 6 are intra-confessional, and
 - 10 are trans-confessional;
- 7 negotiations with a view to closer fellowship short of organic union or full intercommunion; and
- 6 negotiations temporarily suspended, or permanently abandoned.

The fact that representatives of all the great confessional families in the world were together at Lund to worship, study, and discuss the unity of the church cannot but have meaning for the future. Granted that the leaders who appear at such a conference are often chosen for their own personal ecumenical penchant, they would not have been chosen if to some degree they did not represent the basic hopes of their several communions. It is plain that the greater denominations of today, though not ready for compromise, do mean business about ecumenicity.

When the delegates arrived, the only part of their report which had been written in advance was the chapter headings:

The Nature of the Church
Ways of Worship and
Intercommunion

and even these were subject to change—and actually were changed. Admirable preliminary thought had gone into the pre-conference literature—three volumes of essays and three reports on the three subjects—but all this was to be regarded as background material. The conference was left, like Arachne, to spin its own product out of itself.

If my memory serves me, this method derives from practices which dominated young people's conferences in the United States thirty years ago when the accept-nothing-from-the-past philosophy of the younger John Dewey ruled the educational world. "Creative group thinking" of this sort was held at least to be a democratic procedure. As a matter of fact, however, a group on a limited time schedule is necessarily dependent upon the person or persons present who have previously done the most thinking on the subject in hand. In this case the leaders of the three sections considering the nature of the

church were delighted to have the good counsel of Canon Leonard Hodgson, the theological secretary of the Commission. It was thanks to his advance thinking on the main categories for discussion that the report finally came out with some degree of logical respectability.

If the United States is in part responsible for the vogue of the method employed at Lund, may we not hope that the United States, through the World Council Assembly at Evanston, may be in part responsible for deviating from it? Why should not some standing body or some specially appointed committee (both are already available) take time to draft a tentative report for the 1954 Assembly well in advance and then send it out to all the churches for criticism? In the light of those criticisms the report might be drastically changed by the sections of the Assembly itself, but it would then incorporate the values both of decent individual study and of group discussion. The literature preparatory to the Assembly sent to the churches would then be read with a purpose—as background material seldom is.

The report itself begins with a brief

Preface.

This states the purpose of the conference and mentions two points of advance over previous Faith and Order Conference reports.

1. "Its second chapter . . . seeks to initiate a theological study of the biblical teaching about the relation between Christ and the Church."

On every hand appeal was made to have done with the old method of listing the agreements and disagreements of the various churches on the several subjects dealt with, but as long as new generations of thinkers appear at ecumenical discussion-tables, this process must continue in some form, since the contemporary positions of the churches are the point of departure toward a better future.

In one section at Lund, however, they voted to ask a small group of theologians representing the major confessional families to retire in order if possible to develop an initial statement on which they were all fully agreed as theologians and not merely as confessional representatives. This statement, which they produced after several days of labor, is the one referred to in the preface. It is worthy of the high-caliber thinkers who wrote it, but as we look toward coming conferences, can we not plan the huddle in advance of the play, as already suggested? To bereave a section of a half-dozen good brains during the time of the conference itself (though there seemed to be plenty to spare at Lund) might on occasion have untoward results.

2. "The bearing on the problem of unity of social, cultural, political, racial and other so-called 'non-theological' factors . . . may be seen especially in Chapters III and VI."

These non-theological factors, as brought out in a pamphlet written by C. H. Dodd, G. R. Cragg, and Jacques Ellul, and distributed at the Conference, consist of national antagonisms, distrust of the unfamiliar, revivalism, historic isolation, reaction against compulsion, discrimination, habit, sentiment, vested interests, political pressures, institutional pride, mental limitations, sociology, race, indifference, property ownership, prejudices, doctored history, economics, the love of the *status quo*, misrepresentation, war, and personal ambition.

Lausanne in 1927 was practically oblivious of these factors. Edinburgh in 1937 looked with half-opened eye at a few of them. Lund in 1952 was in the main aware of them, but was inclined to take them more for hobgoblins which correct theological formulae might exorcise than for the veritable forces of human nature which create theologies. One came away from Lund feeling that when these now dark non-theological factors are fully understood, the churches will be spiritually equipped for ecumenical victory as they are not yet today.

Even shorter than the preface of the report is

Chapter I: A Word to the Churches.

This is an appeal to the Churches "to penetrate behind our divisions to a deeper . . . understanding of the . . . union of Christ with His Church." For "once again it has been proved true that as we seek to draw closer to Christ we come closer to one another."

Chapter II: Christ and His Church,

has already been referred to. This was produced by a group of theologians *in camera*. It is as satisfying a brief statement of the place of Christ in the Church as this generation is likely to produce. The sub-headings suggest its scope:

The Faith of the Church in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

The Nature and Mission of the Church

The Church between the First and Final Coming of Christ.

The last title picks up the current eschatological interest of the Continent—which was brought to the conference in a notable address by Dr. Schlink of Heidelberg.

Americans are suspicious of any stressing of the Future Advent of Christ because of the connotations that American church history has woven around the phrase "Second Coming." At the mention of it visions of Millerites, Schofield Bibles, and Apocalyptic horesmen dance in their heads. Some Americans who understand both German and English had a curious psychological experience at Lund: they listened to Dr. Schlink's address in German with warmest concurrence, but when they turned to the English translation they could hardly believe it was

the same speech. *Wiederkunft* does not have the meaning for Germans, as Dr. Visser 't Hooft has pointed out, that "Second Coming" has for Americans, and so it is with many another term in the eschatological vocabulary.

Contemporary Continental thought on the subject is not fettered in literalism. According to it, the second person of the Trinity—God in relation to history—who became man in Jesus Christ, will finally meet all mankind. He will not be a different God. He will not have different characteristics. It will be a "return" of the same God we know in Jesus Christ. Already, potentially, he holds the issues of life in his hands: the day must come when the potential unfolds into actuality: we shall know him in majestic and awful completeness as Saviour and Judge.

Though at the moment eschatological ideas are an astonishment and a hissing to many Americans, I feel certain that they will not remain so if the barrier of literal interpretation can be passed. Christian idealism (which in its American form is more than a philosophy) and eschatology have at least one element in common: they both face the future. At Lund they united against absolutizing the tradition of the past.

But eschatology possesses one vital emphasis which is lacking in American idealism—the assurance of divine judgment. The American dream needs just this to rescue it from romanticism, and should welcome it to meet that need.

Lund pointed out that it is in the light of the divine judgment that the reasons for divisions between churches shrink to their proper proportions. Churches which expect to meet their Lord had best prepare for unity.

Chapter III: Continuity and Unity

is the longest chapter of the report, picking up many of the materials prepared by the theological commission which had been working on the Nature of the Church. Under the following sub-headings the advances in thinking to date are registered and further studies recommended:

The Unity of the Church as Indicated in the New Testament

Unity, Continuity, and Discontinuity

Unity and Diversity

The Unity We Have and the Unity We Seek

Illustrations of United Advance

Summary and Prospect

The prospect briefly viewed at the close of this chapter is that which had been set forth in an illuminating introductory address by Canon Hodgson—that of the possibility of unifying the "organic" and the "covenant" ideas of the church. "A covenant relationship *realised to the full* would bind the Churches together into the organic unity of the Body

of Christ . . . the indwelling *Creator Spiritus* unifying the distinct members . . . we believe that this is a most fruitful field for further study."

These sentences, if followed up by study, may prove as important to free-churchmen as any that the report contains. They at least face the problem posed by Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen in an article entitled "Will Lund Be Ecumenical?" published just before the meetings at Lund, copies of which were made available there to all delegates. The article was written as a warning to the Faith and Order movement lest it neglect the "free church" view of the church predominant in North America. A mimeographed commentary on the article was distributed with it, which at once accepted Dr. Van Dusen's insistence on the importance of the matter and defended the movement against the charge of neglect.

The Lund Conference as a whole may be said to have faced the matter of the free church witness and taken at least a few steps toward meeting it.

1. In the sentences quoted above the conference announced the problem as an important matter for future concern. Not all at Lund were ready to admit that a people mutually covenanted to Christ, to each other, and, so far as in them lay, to the rest of the church, were truly an organic part of the church; in fact it might be said that some of the delegates could not conceive of the church except as maintained in its being by a line of bishops or other leaders deriving from the Apostles; but all admitted that it might not be unprofitable to take a careful look at the church as an expression of the divine-human covenant—and who knows what may come of such a look?

2. Both the phraseology and the content of the Lund report itself reflect a better balance between free-church and other participants than did either Lausanne or Edinburgh. At points where free-church representatives desired an additional phrase or sentence to bring out their position they were accorded the full opportunity to make the interpolation—as indeed were all other groups.

Chapter IV: Ways of Worship

with its sub-headings

Agreements

Unresolved Problems

Non-Theological Factors, and
Recommendations

In the section meetings where this subject was treated, one fact which is coming into evidence along the whole widely deployed front of the ecumenical movement was in sharp focus—the fact of the many-sidedness of the ecclesiastical debate. It is growing increasingly difficult to divide the church into two parts—Catholic and Protestant—or even three or four. As Dr. Paul Minear observed, "Every issue

produces a dozen sides rather than two, and on the next issue the sides are re-aligned. This is bewildering to those who want a clear, steady target at which to shoot." It is especially bewildering when the divisions cut across denominational lines—a Baptist and a Lutheran taking the lists together against the fellow-Baptists and fellow-Lutherans, for instance. This is a sign of adulthood within the movement. It means that forthrightness and mutual trust are beginning to cause the lines of denominational loyalty and inhibition to waver.

As for the names Catholic and Protestant, it was evident that the great middle group of communions are quite unhappy in having them used as classifications. All of these communions claim to be Catholic, in that they prize the unbrokenness of their historical dimension as well as the universality of contemporary appeal. It will more and more seem quaint or forced for any denomination to claim catholicity as over against the others—especially on the ground of exclusiveness. On the other hand, these middle-way communions all claim to be Protestant, in that they are essentially evangelical, and capable of evangelical rebirth and development. There was animated protest, for instance, to the suggestion that Eastern Orthodoxy had not altered its polemical theology since of days of John of Damascus.

Remarkable for its clarity is

Chapter V: Intercommunion.

Under three headings

Terminology

The Ordering of the Lord's Supper and

The Communion Services at Ecumenical
Gatherings

it summarizes the best of contemporary thinking on the subject.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, according to the report of a recent speech, still believes intercommunion to be *the* ecumenical problem of the moment—and there are many who agree with him. Tens of millions of other Christians, however, believe they have solved the problem by admitting to the Lord's Table all who profess and call themselves members of Christ's Church. They do not see how they can do more for intercommunion than to accept their Christian brothers to Christ's table; they regard it as a waste of time to discuss the matter further; and they are brought to do so only because of the interest of their brethren in it.

This chapter is a two-edged sword: it asks those to whom intercommunion is a live issue to "re-examine their practice in the light of exceptions which are already customary," and it asks the others why they stop at intercommunion: "they should ask themselves whether they . . . should not move on to a closer relationship of visible unity."

The final chapter

Chapter VI: Where Do We Stand

is a direct appeal to the churches. It points out that the close of the conference marks only the beginning of the work of the churches on the subject. It begs each denomination to make the divisions of Christendom its own problem and not to seek to do alone what can be better done in common with others.

The chapter picks up a theme which had been emphasized and personally illustrated in an address by Dr. Hromadka of Czechoslovakia, that "the Church in our time is experiencing anew the sense of crisis and urgency that marked the Apostolic Age." Dr. Hromadka had implied that there was a certain exhilaration and new freedom in living the life of a theologian in a land where now the Gospel had no generally accepted tradition to rest on and no state and little community support. The Gospel was at its best when it stood on its own eternal values as believers translated them into the life of the day.

According to the delegates as a whole, this description of the relation of the Gospel to contemporaneity is more or less true of every country of the world. The problems for the Christian east and west of the Iron Curtain are one—and it is remarkable that their theology is still one—the same agreements, the same divisions on each side. And on each side it is true that only those who face the total evil of the world with a total and not a fragmentary church can hope for victory.

There were two groups at Lund who made special reports to the conference—the youth and certain representatives of the Younger Churches of the Orient.

The former were youth according to the Continental age limits, that is, well along in their twenties. Their contribution was notable. Scattered through the section meetings, many of them were quite capable of holding their own with the elder theologians. One of their subtler observations was that the ecumenical movement at the world level has from time to time seemed in danger of departing from a well-rounded Trinitarian position to that of a unitarianism built about the second person of the Trinity. The basis of membership in the World Council of Churches, for instance, is described in the constitution as the stark belief in Christ as "God and Saviour." The Committee of Twenty-Five on the program for Evanston, in its first report, takes only a side-glance at the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. At Lund also there seemed some danger that one or two of the sections would overemphasize the place of Christ and underemphasize that of the Holy Spirit, but this was corrected in the plenary sessions.

The Younger Churches' representatives also hinted at this tendency. Perhaps it is natural that where

the solidarity of the church is sought after the spiritual fixities of history should be clung to. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever, becomes the rallying-point. In the Younger Churches, however, as in the churches of the United States on a westering frontier, the search is not so much for spiritual fixity as for spiritual flexibility. Here the Life-Giving Spirit, the Contemporary Paraclete, does his perfect work. It is natural that to such churches as these the World Council should sometimes have seemed less Trinitarian than life demands.

One closing word of warning. Lund was a theological conference. The language of theology was used. This was wholly necessary because of the brevity of time and the need for technical expressions understood by all. The report itself is in the language of theology. It must now be left to Christians who understand both that language and the English language to translate it, for the American churches, into the latter.

News and Notes

Church Gaining in China, Says Protestant Missionary

HONG KONG (RNS) — Many young Chinese are "tired of propaganda and are seeking something deeper," according to Dr. Frank Wilson Price, prominent American Protestant missionary, who arrived here with his wife after waiting 22 months in Shanghai for an exit permit from Communist China.

During their last week in Shanghai, he said, one Chinese Christian pastor baptized 65 of his country men, most of them young people.

Although leaders of the Chinese Church are under "terrific pressure" to approve the expulsion of all foreign missionaries, Dr. Price said, most Chinese Protestants and Roman Catholics are "still loyal to their faiths."

"I cannot tell what churchmen are thinking in their minds and hearts," the missionary said, "but certainly the Church has gained great influence."

(In New York, an official of the Foreign Missions Division of the National Council of Churches said that the Protestant church was strong in Shanghai and that conditions there probably were better than those generally prevailing in China.)

Dr. Price said that membership in Protestant churches in China had grown from 600,000 to 800,000 during the postwar years. Part of this gain has now been lost, Dr. Price explained, owing to the closing of many small churches and the scattering of their congregations.

The majority of the Chinese friends he and his wife made during their many years of service in that country, Dr. Price said, are "still Christians and still friendly, although a few, persuaded to 'patriotic conduct' by the government, turned against us and made accusations."

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A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion

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"Only by living there," he said, "can one understand the tremendous power and diabolical cleverness of the government which is creating the biggest revolution in China's 4,000-year history."

"Our best course is to let the revolution run its way while we show the Chinese people that we do not hate them."

During their long waiting period in Shanghai, Dr. Price said, he and Mrs. Price were always treated "very correctly" by the Chinese Communist government and were subjected only to routine questioning and search, although they lived in daily expectation of arrest and trial.

These fears, he said, arose from constant violent accusations against them in public meetings and through the Communist press and radio. The latter charged that

Dr. Price with heading "a secret spy ring" and asserted that all missionary work in China was "a cover for subversive cultural aggression by the American government."

Their chances of getting out of China looked most precarious during the anti-church campaign, begun by the Reds in April, 1951, when he heard rumors that his execution was being demanded, Dr. Price said.

However, people in the streets remained friendly to foreigners throughout the past three years and the missionary and his wife were able to move freely about Shanghai without ever suffering any indignity.

All foreign signs, even those in Russian, have been removed from Shanghai's streets, said Dr. Price, who added that "there is no love lost between the Chinese and the Russians—and there never has been."

The Prices finally were cleared for exit, he said, but were held another month in Shanghai until their mission residence was handed over to a church organization "approved" by the Communist authorities. They were then given notice, over a weekend, to leave in 48 hours.

Dr. and Mrs. Price are the last of 80 Southern Presbyterian missionaries to get out of China.

Born at Kashing, Chekiang Province, in 1895, Dr. Price spent his boyhood and 30 years of his adult life, the latter in various missionary activities, in China. He was wartime head of Nanking Theological Seminary, and has written and translated many books.

Dr. Price returned to Shanghai, following his last visit to the U. S. in 1948, as Rural Church Secretary of the Church of Christ in China. He resigned this and all other posts at the end of 1950 when he realized that attempting to maintain contact with officials of the Chinese Church would only make things difficult for them.

Italy's Social-Democrats Ask Religious Freedom

Genoa, Italy (RNS)—A resolution calling upon Italian government officials to strictly observe constitutional guarantees of religious freedom was approved by the Social-Democratic Party Congress here.

Its adoption followed a speech by party leader Tristano Codignola demanding "an immediate end to persecution of Protestants." Signor Codignola also urged that a non-partisan public official be made Minister of Education, replacing the present Christian Democrat party member, in order to "protect and guarantee non-confessionalism in the public schools."

The resolution follows:

"The Social-Democratic Congress, troubled by recent instances of religious intolerance culminating in a police ban on holding services in non-Catholic churches, declares that the marginal character of these events does not lessen their gravity and recalls the responsible authorities to a more strict observance of the Constitution's guarantees of freedom of worship for all cults.

"Recognizing the cause of the above-lamented incidents to be the survival of anti-Constitutional Fascist laws, the Congress requests the immediate formulation of a law on the freedom of cults based upon Italy's Republican Constitution."

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